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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3353rd meeting of the Security Council, held on 23 March 1994, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item "The situation in Afghanistan", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council deeply regrets that the food blockade imposed on Kabul continues. This situation is increasing the hardships of the population in all sectors of the capital, since the humanitarian aid that has so far been provided has not alleviated substantially the plight of hundreds of thousands of the city's starving inhabitants.

"The Council continues to believe that the seriousness of the humanitarian situation is entirely due to the ongoing fighting in Afghanistan, and calls for its immediate cessation. This fighting has been the cause of the suffering of the Afghan population and of repeated interruptions in the delivery of humanitarian aid in that country.

"The Council therefore calls for an immediate end to the obstacles to the passage of humanitarian aid in order to ensure that future supplies are distributed without hindrance to the whole of the population. In this regard, the Council expresses its appreciation to the countries in the region for facilitating efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to Kabul and other provinces of the country. Furthermore, the Council calls upon the international community to extend urgent humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan in order to alleviate the suffering of the Afghan people.

"The Council stresses the importance that it attaches to full compliance with international humanitarian law in all its aspects and recalls that those who violate international humanitarian law bear individual responsibility.

"The Council welcomes the Secretary-General's appointment of a special mission to Afghanistan, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/208. This mission will canvass a broad spectrum of Afghanistan's leaders to solicit their views on how the United Nations can best assist Afghanistan in facilitating national rapprochement and reconstruction.

"The Council supports this mission, which is due to leave Geneva soon, and urges all Afghans to assist it in carrying out its mandate and thus promote a cessation of hostilities, the resumption of humanitarian aid and the restoration of peace in Afghanistan."